

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

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01/11/2013	EPA under fire for thrice-delayed Pavillion investigation	Big News Network
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	KULR-TV - Online
01/11/2013	EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation	Wyoming Business Report - Online, The
01/11/2013	Public comment period extended on draft Pavillion Ground Water Research report	County 10
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	Northern Colorado 5 - Online
01/11/2013	Landowner, Encana both object as EPA extends public comment period on Pavillion study 3rd time	Republic - Online, The
01/11/2013	EPA delays Pavillion fracking report	Upstream - Online
01/11/2013	BC-WY--Wyoming News Digest, WY	KING-TV - Online
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	KGWN-TV - Online
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	WJAC-TV - Online
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	Seattle Post-Intelligencer
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	San Antonio Express-News - Online
01/11/2013	EPA delaying Pavillion case for 8 months	E&E News PM
01/11/2013	Fracking Industry Calls Foul on EPA Extension	Corner, The
01/11/2013	Comment Period on Fracking Study Extended Again	BNA's Daily Environment Report
01/11/2013	EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation related to fracking	WyoFile
01/11/2013	Inside Shale Interview on EPA's Pavillion Study	GoMarcellusShale.com
01/11/2013	5 reasons natural gas won't save us	Salon.com
01/11/2013	5 Reasons Natural Gas Won't Be an Environmental and Economic Savior	AlterNet
01/11/2013	E&ENews PM	Land Letter
01/11/2013	EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study	Associated Press (AP) - Cheyenne Bureau

01/10/2013	EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation related to fracking	WyoFile
01/10/2013	No contamination from fracking found in 2 Arkansas counties-USGS	Chicago Tribune Collections
01/10/2013	No contamination from fracking found in 2 Arkansas counties-USGS	Reuters - Online

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US delays finalizing report linking fracking to water pollution

Reuters - Online

Washington, DC

Timothy Gardner

01/14/2013

WASHINGTON Jan 11 (Reuters) - The U.S. government is delaying for 8 months a comment period on a report that offered the first evidence in decades that fracking for natural gas contaminates water supplies.

The stall, the third on the 2011 draft report on water in Wyoming, is the latest example of the federal government delaying conclusions on whether hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, can lead to pollution in water supplies.

The drilling technique has sparked a revolution in domestic drilling that could one day make the country a net gas exporter.

Environmentalists worry fracking can pollute water and air. Drillers deny that and have said Environmental Protection Agency testing methods may have tainted water samples in Pavillion, Wyoming, the region the EPA examined in the report.

The comment period on the EPA report will now last until September 30 to allow residents, industry and local government more time to have their say and for the agency to include new data, an EPA spokeswoman said on Friday.

The report, released by the EPA in December 2011, said the best explanation for the pollution in Pavillion was that fluids used in hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, migrated up from fracking operations and contaminated an aquifer. The chemicals included benzene, alcohols and glycols, it said.

The EPA conducted the report after local residents complained for years about smells and odd tastes in their drinking water drawn from wells near a natural gas field owned by EnCana Corp of Canada.

Environmentalists have said the report confirms their fears. It is the first time since 1987 the government has given evidence that fracking pollutes water supplies. During fracking, companies force large amounts of water, sand and chemicals deep underground to free gas and oil trapped behind rock.

The hot-button topic made its way to Hollywood in December in the movie "Promised Land", with actors Matt Damon and John Krasinski.

In September, the U.S. Geological Survey released raw data on water quality from a well near Pavillion, but did not provide any analysis on the data, leaving the information open to questions.

The EPA said at the time that the data was "generally consistent" with ground water monitoring data at Pavillion that it had previously released.

Encana, which is providing bottled water to about 20 families in Pavillion, blasted the delay. "It's disappointing, there's no credible reason to delay any further," said Doug Hock, an Encana spokesman. The study is a "waste of time and money," he said, adding his company thinks the USGS data showed the water was not contaminated by fracking.

The EPA said in 2011 Wyoming was much more vulnerable than other areas of the country to water contamination from fracking chemicals because drilling there often takes place much closer to the surface than in other states. Wyoming is one of the country's top state producers of natural gas. Output there has suffered recently due to low prices for the fuel.

In the recent past, the agency also delayed results on a wider study on fracking's effects on national water supplies until 2014, two years after initial targets it had set. (Reporting by Timothy Gardner; editing by Andrew Hay)

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EPA ISSUES NOTICE ABOUT EXTENSION OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR INVESTIGATION OF GROUND WATER CONTAMINATION NEAR PAVILLION DRAFT RESEARCH REPORT

Federal News Service

01/14/2013

WASHINGTON, Jan.14 -- Environmental Protection Agency has issued a notice called: Draft Research Report: Investigation of Ground Water Contamination Near Pavillion, WY.

The notice, published in the Federal Register on Jan.11 by Lek G.Kadeli, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, states: "EPA is announcing an extension to the public comment period for the external review of the draft research report titled, "Investigation of Ground Water Contamination near Pavillion, Wyoming." The draft research report was prepared by the National Risk Management Research Laboratory, within the EPA Office of Research and Development, and EPA Region 8.

This draft research report is not final as described in EPA's Information Quality Guidelines, and does not represent and should not be construed to represent Agency policy or views. During the extended public comment period, the EPA will post additional technical information on the web. This will include additional details on how the study was conducted, recent information from Phase V sampling, and responses to issues commonly raised by stakeholders.

The EPA also intends to meet with key stakeholders during this period. The Agency will continue to review the status of its work on Pavillion in light of the additional information posted in the record and public comments that are received, and will examine a number of options going forward."

The full text of the notice can be found at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-01-11/html/2013-00358.htm>

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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A Continuing Wave: The Debate Over Regulation of Fracking Rolls On Power Magazine - Online

01/13/2013

By Mark P. Fitzsimmons and Rachel S. Tennis

Courtesy: Pavillion Area Concerned Citizens

There seems no end to the commentary on hydraulic fracturing and how it should be regulated. Concerns about fracking's risks to human health and the environment have led to fierce opposition among environmentalists and some localities, recently dramatized in Matt Damon's film "Promised Land," a story about a small American town's fierce opposition to proposed natural gas development played in formulaic Hollywood fashion for maximum good David versus bad Goliath effect. On the other side of the spectrum, fracking's proponents argue that the risks are exaggerated and that such unfounded concerns may interfere with the technology's enormous potential for reinvigorating the U.S. domestic energy market and economy. Industry supporters have pointed to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) recent study of drinking water in Dimock, Penn. as evidence that the "crusade" against hydraulic fracturing is unwarranted. After residents expressed concern to the agency last year, the EPA conducted two rounds of sampling at four wells and concluded that the water was safe to drink.

Whatever your opinion on fracking, it is clear there will be significant investment and development going forward. Government estimates of U.S. shale gas reserves have increased over the past five years, and some researchers claim that even those increased estimates are grossly understated. In its 2012 Annual Energy Outlook, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported that the U.S. has 2,203 trillion cubic feet of technically recoverable natural gas—enough to supply more than 90 years of use at 2011 consumption rates. The EIA also predicts that the U.S. will become a net exporter of natural gas by 2020. A study prepared for America's Natural Gas Alliance predicts that by 2035 the U.S. shale gas industry will support 1.6 million jobs, contribute more than \$231 billion to the GDP, and add \$57 billion in government revenues. Meanwhile, legal and technical barriers could delay shale gas development in other parts of the world for up to a decade. (In the European Union, several countries, such as France and Bulgaria, have passed laws banning fracking.) Particularly in this economic climate, these numbers are impossible to ignore.

How much of this potential will be unlocked ultimately depends on several factors, not least the development and stabilization of a still-uncertain and multilayered regulatory regime. Fracking currently is regulated chiefly at the state level, and industry generally supports continued state-level regulation. In waging its battle against state regulators, the anti-fracking movement has succeeded in persuading local officials to further limit the practice at the municipal level. Many localities have instituted zoning controls or outright bans, though they have had mixed results defending these laws against state constitutional challenges.

Meanwhile, the federal government has shown increasing willingness to regulate fracking. The Obama administration has been cautious initially, focusing largely on research and promoting regulatory efficiency. In April, industry praised President Obama for creating an interagency working group to coordinate efforts among the EPA, the Department of Energy, and the Department of the Interior. At the same time, some federal agencies have begun to exercise their regulatory authority. The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) proposed rule for regulating fracking operations on federal lands and the EPA's new Clean Air Act requirements for natural gas wells represent the most significant developments to date. It remains to be seen whether the administration's reelection "mandate" will include stricter controls.

As this complicated regulatory framework continues to develop, it will require careful monitoring by any company reliant on expectations of inexpensive and abundant natural gas. Following our earlier article on U.S. fracking regulation last year, this article provides an update on the significant developments of recent months.

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Testing water and building community
silobreaker.com

01/12/2013

Blogs

Testing Water and Building Community

[

Published 1 hour ago by Firedoglake

]

<p>Last summer I wrote about the Sierra Club's ...

Drumbeat: January 12, 2013

[

Published 9 hours ago by The Oil Drum - Discussions about Energy and Our ...

]

New Saudi refineries to reduce crude oil export cushion DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's drive to build new refineries means its maximum capacity to export crude, the big gun it aims at other producers wanting higher oil prices, is set to decline over the next ...

Fracking Causes Friction In "Promised Land"

[

Published 23 hours ago by OpEdNews

]

This is an overview of the new film "Promised Land", which deals with a community evaluating the pros and cons of fracking. There is also additional information about fracking. ...

'FrackNation' Review: Powerful Response to Anti...

[

Published Jan 11 2013 by Breitbart Feed

]

When a film offers a free-market perspective on the most controversial energy production technique in the country and still gets sterling reviews from Variety and the New York Times , it must be good. In fact, "FrackNation" isn't just good. It's ...

Fracking Industry Calls Foul on EPA Extension

[

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Published Jan 11 2013 by The Corner on National Review Online

]

Yesterday, the Environmental Protection Agency unexpectedly extended the public-comments period for its report on fracking and water contamination in Pavillion, Wyo. Industry groups tell me they're skeptical about the motives behind this decision. ...

Audio/Video

Why Fracking is Safe [

Published Jan 07 2013 by FOX Business - Video

]

The debate over fracking [

Published Dec 30 2012 by CBS News Online - YouTube

]

Is Fracking Key to Driving Job, Economic Growth [

Published Dec 29 2012 by FOX Business - Video

]

Will Obama Take on Fracking With Next EPA Admin... [

Published Dec 29 2012 by FOX Business - Video

]

California Proposes Rules to Regulate Fracking [

Published Dec 20 2012 by FOX Business - Video

]

Press Releases

Halliburton Uses Clean-Burning U.S. Natural Gas... [

Published Jan 11 2013 by EON Energy

]

Halliburton Uses Clean-Burning U.S. Natural Gas... [

Published Jan 11 2013 by Business Wire Energy News

]

Halliburton Uses Clean-Burning U.S. Natural Gas... [

Published Jan 11 2013 by Business Wire Natural Resources News

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]

Halliburton Uses Clean-Burning U.S. Natural Gas... [

Published Jan 11 2013 by Business Wire Manufacturing News

]

"Promised Land" Drills into Fracking Debate [

Published Jan 11 2013 by CisionWire - English

]

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US delays finalizing report linking fracking to water pollution Chicago Tribune - Online

01/12/2013

WASHINGTON, Jan 11 (Reuters) - The U.S. government is delaying for 8 months a comment period on a report that offered the first evidence in decades that fracking for natural gas contaminates water supplies.

The stall, the third on the 2011 draft report on water in Wyoming, is the latest example of the federal government delaying conclusions on whether hydraulic fracturing, or fracking can lead to pollution in water supplies.

The drilling technique has sparked a revolution in domestic drilling that could one day make the country a net gas exporter.

Environmentalists worry fracking can pollute water and air.

Drillers deny that and have said Environmental Protection Agency testing methods may have tainted water samples in Pavillion, Wyoming, the region the EPA examined in the report.

The comment period on the EPA report will now last until more time to have their say and for the agency to include new data, an EPA spokeswoman said on Friday.

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US delays finalizing report linking fracking to water pollution CNBC - Online

01/12/2013

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(Reporting by Timothy Gardner; editing by Andrew Hay)

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US delays finalizing report linking fracking to water pollution Orlando Sentinel - Online

01/12/2013

1:49 p.m. EST, January 11, 2013

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Saturday Saunter Locomotive Breath 1901

01/12/2013

'RADIO GEORGE' HAS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

(BRAVO. Well done to all involved with 'Radio George.' It's a terrific alternative to terrestrial radio. I recommend some smart fella construct a free APP for the various pads, pods, and phones out there. hint, hint)

Regulators Approve KCPL 9.1 percent Rate Increase in Missouri; Utility requested 15.1%

('Under my plan of a cap and trade system, electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket.' - candidate Baraka Obama, 2008; substitute 'EPA' for 'cap & trade;' the poor & children hardest hit)

Sen. Blunt(R - MO) praises Hagel as 'hero,' but doesn't yet offer his vote.

(hemming and hawing before the final capitulation to Obama's choice for Defense Sect'y)

MO Gov. Nixon Wants to Extend School Year by 6 More Days.

(does that include snow days or just additional michael moore agitprop movies?)

Alternative headline: Missouri Tobacco Nazis Demand Smoking Restrictions in Jeff City Offices.

(i hate missouri tobacco nazis)

Alternative headline: KC's Proglodyte Trash Tabloid Swirls the Toilet Bowl as Advertisers Take Money Elsewhere. (900 numbers, skank tats, and tranny body rubs hardest hit)

Reporter Bill Dalton Exit From KC STAR Not Pretty (KC Star's Glass Pavillion Implosion Continues).

GRAY LADY DROWNING: High-level layoffs loom at N.Y. Times.

(but in this booming Obama economy, I'm sure these well-qualified people can find multiple part-time employment in the food service or lawn care industry)

Liberal Stenographer drowning: NY Post Reports Time Magazine to Layoff 600 Next month.

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**Landowner, Encana both object as EPA extends public comment period on Pavillion study
3rd time
Daily Journal - Online**

01/12/2013

CASPER, Wyoming – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has once again extended the public comment period for its study of groundwater pollution in a central Wyoming gas field.

The comment period for the EPA investigation in Pavillion was scheduled to end Tuesday but has been extended until Sept. 30. The comment period was extended twice last year.

The EPA theorized over a year ago that hydraulic fracturing may have played a role in the pollution. The federal agency says the longer comment period will allow more time for people to weigh in on the testing.

The Casper Star-Tribune reports both a landowner with contaminated groundwater and the owner of the Pavillion gas field, Encana Oil and Gas, object to extending the comment period. Both sides say they want the studies to wrap up.

Information from: Casper (Wyo.) Star-Tribune, <http://www.trib.com>

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

**Here is the latest Wyoming news from The Associated Press
Associated Press (AP) - Cheyenne Bureau**

01/12/2013

CHEYENNE, Wyo. _ The city-county health departments in Wyoming's two largest communities are out of the flu vaccine at what may be the peak of this year's nasty flu season. Cheyenne-Laramie County and Cheyenne-Laramie County health departments are tapped out, but many clinics and retail stores still have the inoculation. State health officials say this is the worst flu season in three years but there are signs it may have peaked in Wyoming.

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) _ The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has again extended the public comment period for its study of groundwater pollution in a central Wyoming gas field. The public will have until Sept. 30 to submit comments on the EPA investigation in Pavillion. The EPA theorized over a year ago that hydraulic fracturing may have played a role in the pollution.

CODY, Wyo. (AP) _ A Montana man charged with kidnapping and assaulting an 11-year-old Wyoming girl is facing new felony charges. The Billings Gazette reports 40-year-old Jesse Paul Speer was charged with aggravated assault and sexual abuse of a minor after a court hearing. He was initially charged with kidnapping, aggravated assault and a weapons count after his October arrest.

LARAMIE, Wyo. (AP) _ The NCAA has denied granting another year of eligibility to senior Wyoming safety Luke Ruff. UW had requested a medical hardship waiver for Ruff, who played in five games last season before an injury forced him to miss the rest of the season. Ruff finishes his career at UW with 175 career tackles.

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EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

Latest Wyoming news, sports, business and entertainment Associated Press (AP) - Cheyenne Bureau

01/12/2013

FLU-WYOMING

Wyo health depts out of vaccine at flu season peak

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) _ The city-county health departments in Wyoming's two largest communities are out of influenza vaccine at what may be the peak of this year's nasty flu season.

Health officials in Laramie County said Friday they don't expect to get more from the vaccine manufacturers, but that doesn't mean the flu situation is dire in southeast Wyoming.

They say the Cheyenne-Laramie County Health Department had a successful flu vaccine campaign that immunized some 4,000 people. That's not counting those who got immunized at clinics and retail stores, and many of those locations still have vaccine.

The Casper-Natrona County Health Department also is out of flu vaccine.

State health officials say this is the worst flu season in three years but there are signs that flu season may have peaked in Wyoming.

WYOMING ABDUCTION

Man accused in Wyo. abduction faces 3 new charges

CODY, Wyo. (AP) _ A Montana man charged with kidnapping and assaulting an 11-year-old girl from Wyoming is facing new felony charges.

The Billings Gazette reports 40-year-old Jesse Paul Speer was charged with aggravated assault and sexual abuse of a minor in the first and second degree after a court hearing.

He was initially charged after his arrest in October with kidnapping, aggravated assault and using a gun in the commission of a felony. He had pleaded not guilty to those charges.

Speer is being held in Cody, Wyo., with bond set at \$2 million.

He is accused of abducted the girl in Cody in early October. Authorities say he sexually assaulted her before releasing her. Hunters later found her and took her to safety.

Speer previously lived in Colorado.

SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT

Wyoming Senate panels advance schools' chief bill

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) _ A proposed bill to drastically reduce the administrative role of Wyoming's top state public schools official has cleared two state Senate committees.

On Friday, the Senate Education Committee unanimously approved Senate File 104, and the Senate Appropriations Committee followed with a 4-1 endorsement. The bill now goes to the full Senate for debate.

A proposal would remove the Wyoming superintendent of public instruction as head of the state Department of Education. It would create a new director of the agency who would be appointed by the governor.

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Superintendent Cindy Hill spoke against the bill Friday, saying the proposal would take away the voice of the people who elected her and replace it with a bureaucrat.

Supporters say it would help take the political dysfunction out of state education.

TOURISM PROMOTION

Some in Jackson upset about proposed tourism cut

(Information in the following story is from: KCWY-TV, <http://www.kcwy13.com>)

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) _ Some business owners and tourism officials in Jackson are worried about a proposal to cut more than \$1 million from the state's tourism budget.

Business owner Stephen Price told KCWY-TV that the governor's proposed cut could affect the number of people visiting Jackson Hole and, ultimately, how many people are employed in tourism-related businesses.

Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce director Jeff Golightly said Wyoming needs to stay competitive with surrounding states like Colorado and Montana in trying to attract tourists.

Last year, the Jackson Hole Travel and Tourism Board spent over \$2 million to try to lure visitors to the area.

RADIOACTIVE WASTE

Bill to allow radioactive waste storage advances

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) _ A bill to permit construction of temporary, high-level radioactive waste storage facilities in Wyoming has cleared a committee vote.

The Senate Minerals, Business and Economic Development Committee on Friday recommended approval of a bill to allow construction of temporary, high-level waste storage facilities.

The storage facilities would only be allowed if they stored waste produced by a nuclear power generation facility operating within the state.

There are no such nuclear plants operating in Wyoming now. The chairmen of both the Senate and House Minerals Committees said they're not aware of any immediate plans to construct them.

FRACKING-GROUNDWATER POLLUTION

EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study

(Information in the following story is from: Casper (Wyo.) Star-Tribune, <http://www.trib.com>)

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) _ The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has once again extended the public comment period for its study of groundwater pollution in a central Wyoming gas field.

The comment period for the EPA investigation in Pavillion was scheduled to end Tuesday but has been extended until Sept. 30. The comment period was extended twice last year.

The EPA theorized over a year ago that hydraulic fracturing may have played a role in the pollution. The federal agency says the longer comment period will allow more time for people to weigh in on the testing.

The Casper Star-Tribune reports both a landowner with contaminated groundwater and the owner of the Pavillion gas field, Encana Oil and Gas, object to extending the comment period. Both sides say they want the studies to wrap up.

DEER POACHING

Litter leads to poaching charges

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

(Information in the following story is from: Casper (Wyo.) Star-Tribune, <http://www.trib.com>)

PINEDALE, Wyo. (AP) _ Wyoming Game and Fish Department investigators have charged two men with poaching deer after linking trash found at the scene of the crime to them.

The two buck deer were found on winter range near Big Sandy in southwest Wyoming last month.

Pinedale warden Jordan Kraft was able to trace a discarded energy drink and chewing tobacco can to two suspects. Kraft then found missing parts of the poached deer and other evidence behind one suspect's house in Moorcroft.

State Chief Game Warden Brian Nesvik tells the Casper Star-Tribune that poaching crimes on the winter range in southwest Wyoming are treated as a high priority in part because deer are in the middle of their rut, often near roads and vulnerable.

WYOMING-RUFF

NCAA denies extra year to UW's Ruff

LARAMIE, Wyo. (AP) _ The NCAA has denied granting another year of eligibility to senior Wyoming safety Luke Ruff.

UW had requested a medical hardship waiver for Ruff, who played in five games last season before an injury forced him to miss the rest of the season.

However, the NCAA denied UW's request and subsequent appeal.

Ruff finishes his career at UW with 175 career tackles

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EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA under fire for thrice-delayed Pavillion investigation
Big News Network

01/11/2013

CASPER, Wyo. -- Federal environmental regulators have once again lengthened their investigation into potential groundwater contamination at a west-central Wyoming natural gas field, riling the operator in the field and area landowners, who are both fed up with the delays. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday stretched to Sept. 30 the public comment period on its investigation of the natural gas field near Pavillion, its third such ...

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EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study KULR-TV - Online

01/11/2013

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EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation Wyoming Business Report - Online, The

01/11/2013

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has again delayed action in its highly controversial investigation into contaminated drinking water in Pavillion, Wyoming.

WyoFile yesterday obtained a document scheduled to be published in the Federal Register today, announcing the extension of the public comment period for EPA Region 8's "Investigation of Ground Water Contamination near Pavillion, Wyoming" to September 30, 2013.

Public comment was first initiated in December 2011.

That draft report, released publicly in December 2011, alleged that chemicals commonly associated with hydraulic fracturing – or "fracking" – indeed contributed to contaminated drinking water in the tiny, rural farming community.

The report set off a firestorm of criticism from both Wyoming officials and Pavillion natural gas field operator Encana Oil & Gas USA, taking aim at the EPA's methodology, data and conclusions. In the controversy, a scientific peer review required to finalize the draft report has been continually delayed.

This week's news of yet another delay further frustrated stakeholders on all sides of the issue, including some Pavillion area residents who believe the EPA's investigation – and conclusions mentioned in the draft report – is the most reliable information on the matter.

"What it really means for us is months and months of waiting and still being exposed to impacts that we've suffered all along and having no resolution," Pavillion area rancher John Fenton told WyoFile. "Go ahead and extend public comment, but allow the peer review go forward. ... I'm trying to find out who requested this."

A spokesman for Encana Oil & Gas USA said the company was equally disappointed.

"This issue goes to our reputation and we take this very seriously and we don't believe the issues in Pavillion are related to our oil and gas operation," Encana spokesman Doug Hock told WyoFile. "It's a disservice to us and a disservice to people of Pavillion and to the state of Wyoming."

Hock said Encana had prepared several third-party reports from geologists, hydrologists and other experts to submit to EPA next week. The reports essentially are a critique of EPA's groundwater investigation, which Encana believes has been proven scientifically invalid.

That question of validity, however, cannot be officially answered until – and unless – a peer review weighs in on the matter.

The EPA issued this statement today: "During this time EPA will continue its public outreach activities, including meeting with key stakeholders and posting additional technical information on the agency's website. This extension will allow the public additional opportunity to comment on EPA's draft report and the latest round of sampling conducted by EPA and USGS. The agency will take into account new data, further stakeholder input and public comment as it continues to review the status of the Pavillion investigation and considers options for moving forward."

In the meantime, dozens of families are left without answers as to why their drinking water is fouled.

"We have all this work and it's not being allowed to continue on through this peer review process and come to some conclusion," Fenton said.

The state has pitched in money to provide cisterns as a temporary fix, although few homeowners have committed to having them installed because they still have to pay for water. The state has also launched planning efforts for a long-term water supply solution.

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

Encana is still providing some water on a temporary basis. The company continues to operate about 145 natural gas wells in the Pavillion field, and says it has not performed any drilling or fracking operations since 2007. This past year, a potential buyer backed out of negotiations to purchase the field.

"That buyer decided, because of the ongoing issues with EPA, decided not to go through with that transaction," said Hock. "It's not a core asset for us."

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

Public comment period extended on draft Pavillion Ground Water Research report County 10

01/11/2013

(Pavillion, Wyo.) - The Environmental Protection Agency announced today an extension to the public comment period for the external review of its draft research report, "investigation of Ground Water Contamination near Pavillion, Wyo." according to a notice published today in the Federal Register. The public comment period began December 14, 2012 and is now extended to September 30, 2013.

The draft research report was prepared by the National Risk Management Research Laboratory, within the EPA Office of Research and Development, and EPA Region 8 in Denver.

According to today's posting in the Federal Register, the draft research report is not a final version, and, during the extended comment period, the EPA will post additional technical information on the web. This will include additional details on how the study was conducted, recent information from Phase V sampling, and responses to issues commonly raised by stakeholders.

The EPA launched the study on local resident concerns of contamination of water wells, "based on resident complaints about smells, taste, and adverse changes in water quality of their domestic wells." The purpose of the current study, according to the EPA, "is to better understand the basic ground water hydrology and how the constituents of concern may be occurring in the aquifer."

The draft report can be found [here](#).

Tags: County10, Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, National Risk Management Research Laboratory, Pavillion Ground Water REsearch, report

Category: Latest Headlines, News

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study Northern Colorado 5 - Online

01/11/2013

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has once again extended the public comment period for its study of groundwater pollution in a central Wyoming gas field.

The comment period for the EPA investigation in Pavillion was scheduled to end Tuesday but has been extended until Sept. 30. The comment period was extended twice last year.

The EPA theorized over a year ago that hydraulic fracturing may have played a role in the pollution. The federal agency says the longer comment period will allow more time for people to weigh in on the testing.

The Casper Star-Tribune reports both a landowner with contaminated groundwater and the owner of the Pavillion gas field, Encana Oil and Gas, object to extending the comment period. Both sides say they want the studies to wrap up.

Information from: Casper (Wyo.) Star-Tribune, <http://www.trib.com>

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EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

**Landowner, Encana both object as EPA extends public comment period on Pavillion study
3rd time
Republic - Online, The**

01/11/2013

CASPER, Wyoming – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has once again extended the public comment period for its study of groundwater pollution in a central Wyoming gas field.

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EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA delays Pavillion fracking report Upstream - Online

01/11/2013

Delayed: EPA to wait another eight months to finalise Pavillion fracking report

The US government is delaying for eight months a comment period on a report that offered the first evidence in decades that hydraulic fracturing contaminates water supplies.

The stall, the third on the 2011 draft report on water in Pavillion, Wyoming, is the latest example of the federal government delaying conclusions on whether fracking can lead to water contamination, as some environmentalists have claimed.

Drillers have said Environmental Protection Agency testing methods in Pavillion may have tainted water samples.

The comment period on the EPA report will now last until 30 September to allow residents, industry and local government more time to have their say and for the agency to include new data, an EPA spokeswoman told Reuters on Friday.

The report, released by the EPA in December 2011, said the best explanation for the pollution in Pavillion was that fracking fluids migrated from wells and contaminated an aquifer. The chemicals included benzene, alcohols and glycols, it said.

The EPA conducted the report after local residents complained for years about smells and odd tastes in their drinking water drawn from wells near a natural gas field owned by EnCana of Canada.

Environmentalists have said the report confirms their fears. It is the first time since 1987 the government has given evidence that fracking pollutes water supplies.

In September, the US Geological Survey released raw data on water quality from a well near Pavillion, but did not provide any analysis on the data, leaving the information open to questions.

The EPA said at the time that the data was "generally consistent" with groundwater monitoring data at Pavillion that it had previously released.

Encana, which is providing bottled water to about 20 families in Pavillion, blasted the delay.

"It's disappointing, there's no credible reason to delay any further," Encana spokesman Doug Hock told Reuters.

The study is a "waste of time and money", he said, adding his company thinks the USGS data showed the water was not contaminated by fracking.

The EPA said in 2011 Wyoming was much more vulnerable than other areas of the country to water contamination from fracking chemicals because drilling there often takes place much closer to the surface than in other states.

In the recent past, the agency also delayed results on a wider study on fracking's effects on national water supplies until 2014, two years after initial targets it had set.

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

BC-WY--Wyoming News Digest, WY KING-TV - Online

01/11/2013

If you have questions about stories, call the Cheyenne bureau at 307-632-9351. AP stories, along with the photos that accompany them, can be obtained from <http://www.apexchange.com>. Reruns are also available from the Service Desk (877-836-9477). For technical help, call (800) 453-1269. Please send stories and news tips to [apcheyyenne\(at\)ap.org](mailto:apcheyyenne(at)ap.org).

SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT

CHEYENNE – A proposed bill to drastically reduce the administrative role of Wyoming's top state public schools official cleared two Senate committees Friday, even though Superintendent of Public Instruction Cindy Hill says the proposal would make her office a ceremonial position. Senate File 104 was approved by the Senate Education Committee without debate on a 5-0 vote and then won a 4-1 endorsement from the Senate Appropriations Committee. The measure goes to the full Senate for consideration. By Bob Moen.

FLU-WYOMING

CHEYENNE – The Cheyenne-Laramie County Health Department has run out of flu vaccine at what may be the peak of this year's nasty flu season. Health officials don't expect to get more, but it's not all bad news. They say they're coming off one of their better flu vaccination campaigns.

AIR FORCE-BUDGET CUTS

WASHINGTON – Air Force leaders will cut flying hours by nearly 20 percent and prepare for a possible end to all noncombat or noncritical flights from late July through September if Congress can't agree on a budget and billions of dollars in automatic cuts are triggered. In an Air Force internal memo obtained by The Associated Press, Air Force Secretary Michael Donley laid out broad but grim steps the service will be taking in coming days and weeks to enforce a civilian hiring freeze, cancel air show appearances and flyovers, and slash base improvements and repairs by about 50 percent. By Lolita C. Baldor.

Eds: Moved national lines.

ALSO:

- FRACKING-GROUNDWATER POLLUTION – EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study.
- RADIOACTIVE WASTE – Bill to allow radioactive waste storage advances.
- RIG COUNT – US rig count drops this week by 1.
- DEER POACHING – Litter leads to poaching charges.
- TOURISM PROMOTION – Some in Jackson upset about proposed tourism cut.
- FATAL PICKUP CRASH – 2 Scottsbluff teens dead in eastern Wyoming crash.
- SLED DOG RACE – Stage Stop 2013: 23 teams, 368 dogs will race.

SPORTS:

- WYOMING-RUFF – NCAA denies extra year to UW's Ruff.
- FBC-NEVADA COACH-POLIAN CONTRACT – New Nevada FB coach Polian gets \$2.8M, 5 years.

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study KGWN-TV - Online

01/11/2013

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has once again extended the public comment period for its study of groundwater pollution in a central Wyoming gas field.

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EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study WJAC-TV - Online

01/11/2013

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EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study Seattle Post-Intelligencer

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EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study San Antonio Express-News - Online

01/11/2013

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EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA delaying Pavillion case for 8 months E&E News PM

01/11/2013

U.S. EPA is delaying its work on the Pavillion, Wyo., water pollution case by more than eight months, angering both sides in the bitter debate about whether drilling and hydraulic fracturing contaminated drinking water in the area.

Neither the people who say their water is contaminated nor the company involved, Encana Corp., wanted the delay. Representatives of both sides today criticized the decision.

"This is very disappointing," said Doug Hock, spokesman for Encana Oil & Gas (USA) Inc. "It's a disservice not only to Encana, but to the people of Pavillion and the state of Wyoming. There's no credible reason for any further delay on this issue."

Encana is the main driller in the Pavillion area, where EPA has been testing groundwater because of complaints from landowners about fouled water.

In a draft report released a year ago, the researchers said they had found fluid from hydraulic fracturing in groundwater but not in drinking water.

Encana, along with state officials, maintains that EPA contaminated the water itself when it drilled its two monitoring wells (EnergyWire, Dec. 7, 2012).

EPA is to put a notice in the Federal Register tomorrow that it will extend the comment period, which was to expire next week, until Sept. 30, according to a federal document posted today. The agency released a statement but did not provide an explicit reason for the delay.

"This extension will allow the public additional opportunity to comment on EPA's draft report and the latest round of sampling conducted by EPA" and the U.S. Geological Survey, an agency spokesman said in a statement. "The agency will take into account new data, further stakeholder input, and public comment as it continues to review the status of the Pavillion investigation and considers options for moving forward."

The vague reasoning left room for people on both sides to speculate about what is happening behind the scenes.

Deb Thomas, an organizer who has worked with the Pavillion-area residents with water complaints, said she believes EPA headquarters officials in Washington are interfering with the diligent efforts of scientists at the agency's Denver-based Region 8 office.

"Region 8 has done such a good job on this," Thomas said. "It appears that upper levels of management are not giving residents of Pavillion the same consideration."

Industry officials say EPA is trying to figure out what to do with flawed findings.

"This delay shows that the EPA is running scared," said Simon Lomax, the Denver-based spokesman for the industry campaign Energy in Depth. "The agency knows its draft report is deeply flawed, but instead of doing the responsible thing and withdrawing it, EPA is dragging out the process."

Some pointed out that EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson plans to leave before the end of the month. An industry source speculated that the agency might not want a new administrator to have to deal with the Pavillion controversy "on day one."

The length of the delay is also unusual. Comment periods are usually extended by 30, 60 or 90 days.

EPA has already delayed the case once after a combined assault on the findings by industry and state officials.

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

Fracking Industry Calls Foul on EPA Extension Corner, The

01/11/2013

Yesterday, the Environmental Protection Agency unexpectedly extended the public-comments period for its report on fracking and water contamination in Pavillion, Wyo. Industry groups tell me they're skeptical about the motives behind this decision.

If the EPA could prove that fracking caused water contamination in the small Wyoming town, it would be an unprecedented discovery. (So far, even Lisa Jackson has been forced to admit there's no such proven connection.) But the Pavillion study is potentially problematic, as I've written recently.

Keep reading this post . . .

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

Comment Period on Fracking Study Extended Again BNA's Daily Environment Report

01/11/2013

The Environmental Protection Agency has extended the comment deadline on the external review of the draft research report, Investigation of Ground Water Contamination Near Pavillion, Wyoming, through Sept. 30, according to a notice being published Jan. 11. EPA's draft December 2011 report linked groundwater contamination in Pavillion, Wyo., to hydraulic fracturing, but that finding has been disputed by the Independent Petroleum Association of America. The report indicated that samples taken from deep monitoring wells in the aquifer contained synthetic chemicals, such as glycols and alcohols, consistent with gas production and hydraulic fracturing fluids. EPA last extended comments on the report in March 2012. Comments can be submitted through the <http://www.regulations.gov> website using Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-ORD-2011-0895. Additional information on the site, which includes the draft report, is available at <http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/wy/pavillion/index.html> (60 DEN A-13, 3/29/12).

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation related to fracking WyoFile

01/11/2013

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has again delayed action in its highly controversial investigation into contaminated drinking water in Pavillion, Wyoming.

WyoFile obtained a document scheduled to be published in the Federal Register on January 11, 2013, announcing the extension of the public comment period for EPA Region 8's "Investigation of Ground Water Contamination near Pavillion, Wyoming" to September 30, 2013.

Public comment was first initiated in December 2011.

Tanks hold natural gas condensate and mark the spot of producing gas wells in the Pavillion field, in Fremont County, Wyo., in the heart of the Wind River Indian Reservation. The Environmental Protection Agency said it found chemicals that are used in gas drilling in water wells near this site. (Abrahm Lustgarten/ProPublica)
That draft report, released publicly in December 2011, alleged that chemicals commonly associated with hydraulic fracturing – or “fracking” – indeed contributed to contaminated drinking water in the tiny, rural farming community.

The report set off a firestorm of criticism from both Wyoming officials and Pavillion natural gas field operator EnCana Oil & Gas USA, taking aim at the EPA's methodology, data and conclusions. In the controversy, a scientific peer review required to finalize the draft report has been continually delayed.

This week's news of yet another delay further frustrated stakeholders on all sides of the issue, including some Pavillion area residents who believe the EPA's investigation – and conclusions mentioned in the draft report – is the most reliable information on the matter.

“What it really means for us is months and months of waiting and still being exposed to impacts that we've suffered all along and having no resolution,” Pavillion area rancher John Fenton told WyoFile. “Go ahead and extend public comment, but allow the peer review go forward. I'm trying to find out who requested this.”

A spokesman for EnCana Oil & Gas USA said the company was equally disappointed.

“This issue goes to our reputation and we take this very seriously and we don't beleive the issues in Pavillion are related to our oil and gas operation,” EnCana spokesman Doug Hock told WyoFile. “It's a disservice to us and a disservice to people of Pavillion and to the state of Wyoming.”

Hock said EnCana had prepared several third party reports from geologists, hydrologists and other experts to submit to EPA next week. The reports essentially are a critique of EPA's groundwater investigation, which EnCana believes has been proven scientifically invalid.

That question of validity, however, cannot be officially answered until – and unless – a peer review weighs in on the matter.

Jeffrey Locker stands next to a natural gas well behind his home near Pavillion. (Dustin Bleizeffer/WyoFile - click to enlarge)

The EPA issued this statement today; “During this time EPA will continue its public outreach activities including meeting with key stakeholders and posting additional technical information on the agency's website. This extension will allow the public additional opportunity to comment on EPA's draft report and the latest round of sampling conducted by EPA and USGS. The Agency will take into account new data, further stakeholder input, and public comment as it continues to review the status of the Pavillion investigation and considers options for moving forward.”

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EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

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EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

Inside Shale Interview on EPA's Pavillion Study
GoMarcellusShale.com

01/11/2013

Yesterday I had the pleasure of appearing on "Inside Shale" out of WAJR in Morgantown, WV to discuss my recent OpEd.

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

5 reasons natural gas won't save us Salon.com

01/11/2013

We can't drill our way out of the climate crisis without creating an even bigger mess in the process

Topics: AlterNet, natural gas, Climate Change, Methane, , Politics News

This article originally appeared on AlterNet.

If you're hoping the natural gas boom means we've solved our environmental and economic woes, you're going to be disappointed. While natural gas produces less nitrogen oxides and carbon dioxide when burned compared to coal or oil, the end product is only part of the story. The natural gas boom in recent years has been fueled by extreme extraction methods like fracking that are posing a new slurry of environmental problems before the gas even makes it to consumers.

If you look at the complete picture of how we extract natural gas today, you begin to realize pretty quickly that we aren't going to be able to drill our way out of the climate crisis without creating an even bigger mess in the process. The list of impacts from fracking is huge, but here are five to kick off the conversation:

Natural gas may release less pollution when burned, but it still may be a significant contributor to global warming pollution after all because we must take into account what happens during extraction, too. "Scientists are once again reporting alarmingly high methane emissions from an oil and gas field, underscoring questions about the environmental benefits of the boom in natural-gas production that is transforming the US energy system," writes Jeff Tollefson for Nature. He explains:

The researchers, who hold joint appointments with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the University of Colorado in Boulder, first sparked concern in February 2012 with a study suggesting that up to 4% of the methane produced at a field near Denver was escaping into the atmosphere. If methane – a potent greenhouse gas – is leaking from fields across the country at similar rates, it could be offsetting much of the climate benefit of the ongoing shift from coal- to gas-fired plants for electricity generation.

Industry officials and some scientists contested the claim, but at an American Geophysical Union (AGU) meeting in San Francisco, California, last month, the research team reported new Colorado data that support the earlier work, as well as preliminary results from a field study in the Uinta Basin of Utah suggesting even higher rates of methane leakage – an eye-popping 9% of the total production. That figure is nearly double the cumulative loss rates estimated from industry data – which are already higher in Utah than in Colorado.

When it comes to climate change, leaking methane is a big deal. The EPA reports, "Pound for pound, the comparative impact of CH₄ [methane] on climate change is over 20 times greater than CO₂ over a 100-year period.

2. Water Pollution

Methane released during fracking doesn't just end up in the air, but also in the water. By now you've likely already seen the videos of people living near gas drilling operations who can light their water on fire as it comes out of the tap. (If you haven't then it's time to see "Gasland.") In 2011 the United States Geological Survey released a report about water in Pavillion, Wyoming where residents complained about water quality after drilling. Here's what they found:

EPA's analysis of samples taken from the Agency's deep monitoring wells in the aquifer indicates detection of synthetic chemicals, like glycols and alcohols consistent with gas production and hydraulic fracturing fluids, benzene concentrations well above Safe Drinking Water Act standards and high methane levels. Given the area's complex geology and the proximity of drinking water wells to ground water contamination, EPA is concerned about the movement of contaminants within the aquifer and the safety of drinking water wells over time.

Other studies have show the same, including one published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. Abrahm Lustgarten writes for ProPublica:

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

The research was conducted by four scientists at Duke University. They found that levels of flammable methane gas in drinking water wells increased to dangerous levels when those water supplies were close to natural gas wells. They also found that the type of gas detected at high levels in the water was the same type of gas that energy companies were extracting from thousands of feet underground, strongly implying that the gas may be seeping underground through natural or manmade faults and fractures, or coming from cracks in the well structure itself.

And that's just the methane. Frack fluid that is injected into the wells contains a toxic soup of hundreds of chemicals, including carcinogens and volatile organic compounds like benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene. Companies aren't required to disclose what chemicals they're using either – so it makes it difficult to test for leaks and spills, and for people to be treated for health problems that may arise from exposure.

Oh yeah, and fracking is exempt from the Safe Drinking Water Act – thanks Dick Cheney!

3. Water Consumption

Fracking is water intensive. It can take anywhere from 2 million to 13 million gallons of water to frack a single well and more water is needed to drill the well. Additionally wells are often fracked multiple times, some times as many as 18 times. Where does all that water come from? The Pacific Institute reports:

Water for hydraulic fracturing is typically withdrawn from one location or watershed over several days. Additionally, in some cases, the water is taken from "remote, often environmentally sensitive headwater areas" (Beauduy 2011, 34), where even small withdrawals can have a significant impact on the flow regime. As a result, while fracking may account for a small fraction of a state's or even a basin's water supply, there can be more severe local impacts.

Additionally, much of the water injected underground is either not recovered or is unfit for further use once it is returned to the surface, usually requiring disposal in an underground injection well. This water use represents a "consumptive" use if it is not available for subsequent use within the basin from which it was extracted. In some cases, water is treated and reused for subsequent fracking jobs, although this is still fairly uncommon, and no national estimate on the prevalence of this practice is available.

Already states like Texas and Pennsylvania have run into conflicts with fracking due to water shortages. And things are likely to get worse, as the Pacific Institute states, "In many basins, the application of fracking is still in its infancy and continued development could dramatically increase future water requirements and further intensify conflicts with other uses."

4. Trucks

How does all the water and chemicals get to drilling sites? Trucks, trucks and more trucks. In Pennsylvania it was estimated that drilling and fracking a single well can result in 1,000 truck trips. For residents in rural areas, this means a constant stream of trucks barreling along small roads, some unpaved. Residents have complained of pollution from idling diesel trucks, roads that aren't big enough for the vehicles, dust pollution on unpaved roads, and excessive wear and tear on bridges and pavement. The results have been accidents galore and big bills for taxpayers.

Jim Efstathiou Jr. wrote for Business Week:

A surge in hydraulic fracturing to get gas and oil trapped in rock means drillers need to haul hundreds of truckloads of sand, water and equipment for a single well. Drilling that added jobs and tax revenue for many states also has increased traffic on roads too flimsy to handle the 80,000-pound (36,300 kilogram) trucks that serve well sites.

The resulting road damage will cost tens of millions of dollars to fix and is catching officials from Pennsylvania to Texas off guard. Measures to ensure that roads are repaired don't capture the full cost of damage, potentially leaving taxpayers with the bill, according to Lynne Irwin, director of Cornell University's local roads program in Ithaca, New York.

... Last month, [Texas'] Transportation Commission approved \$40 million to repair roads near the Barnett Shale in North Texas and the Eagle Ford Shale in South Texas.

5. Economic Fallout

So much for the economic boom that fracking was suppose to create for small towns. The road repairs are just the start.

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

In one of the most heavily drilled counties in the Marcellus Shale, a hospital CEO in Pennsylvania is now blaming the gas drilling industry for an operating loss. The AP reported:

Jersey Shore Hospital president and CEO Carey Plummer told the Sun-Gazette of Williamsport that many subcontractors attracted to the area's Marcellus Shale drilling boom do not cover employees.

That has brought a growing number of uninsured people to the community-owned, nonprofit hospital, Plummer said.

"We had a loss," Plummer said. "I don't think it's a sign of the economy. I think it's the influx of the gas, industry and those who lack insurance."

Homeowners may also stand to lose. The Huffington Post reported, "Nationwide Mutual Insurance Co. has become the first major insurance company to say it won't cover damage related to a gas drilling process that blasts chemical-laden water deep into the ground." The company released a memo that said:

After months of research and discussion, we have determined that the exposures presented by hydraulic fracturing are too great to ignore. Risks involved with hydraulic fracturing are now prohibited for General Liability, Commercial Auto, Motor Truck Cargo, Auto Physical Damage and Public Auto (insurance) coverage.

While the fracking industry promises to create jobs, those like Tish O'Dell, co-founder of the Cleveland-area group Mothers Against Drilling in Our Neighborhoods, wonder about what jobs will be lost from impacts to farming, tourism and dairies. She told Midwest Energy News, "If you were going to do a really serious study you would look at these things," she said. "If water is contaminated and fish die, what are the fishermen going to do? If you have parks where people go for peace and quiet, what happens when you turn it into an industrial landscape? If you have an organic dairy and the soil is polluted, what does that mean? These are all valid questions."

EPA & Pavillion - Jan. 10 to 14

5 Reasons Natural Gas Won't Be an Environmental and Economic Savior AlterNet

01/11/2013

We aren't going to be able to drill our way out of the climate crisis without creating an even bigger mess in the process.

This article was published in partnership with GlobalPossibilities.org.

If you're hoping the natural gas boom means we've solved our environmental and economic woes, you're going to be disappointed. While natural gas produces less nitrogen oxides and carbon dioxide when burned compared to coal or oil, the end product is only part of the story. The natural gas boom in recent years has been fueled by extreme extraction methods like fracking that are posing a new slurry of environmental problems before the gas even makes it to consumers.

If you look at the complete picture of how we extract natural gas today, you begin to realize pretty quickly that we aren't going to be able to drill our way out of the climate crisis without creating an even bigger mess in the process. The list of impacts from fracking is huge, but here are five to kick off the conversation:

1. Methane

Natural gas may release less pollution when burned, but it still may be a significant contributor to global warming pollution after all because we must take into account what happens during extraction, too. "Scientists are once again reporting alarmingly high methane emissions from an oil and gas field, underscoring questions about the environmental benefits of the boom in natural-gas production that is transforming the US energy system," writes Jeff Tollefson for Nature. He explains:

The researchers, who hold joint appointments with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the University of Colorado in Boulder, first sparked concern in February 2012 with a study suggesting that up to 4% of the methane produced at a field near Denver was escaping into the atmosphere. If methane – a potent greenhouse gas – is leaking from fields across the country at similar rates, it could be offsetting much of the climate benefit of the ongoing shift from coal- to gas-fired plants for electricity generation.

Industry officials and some scientists contested the claim, but at an American Geophysical Union (AGU) meeting in San Francisco, California, last month, the research team reported new Colorado data that support the earlier work, as well as preliminary results from a field study in the Uinta Basin of Utah suggesting even higher rates of methane leakage – an eye-popping 9% of the total production. That figure is nearly double the cumulative loss rates estimated from industry data – which are already higher in Utah than in Colorado.

When it comes to climate change, leaking methane is a big deal. The EPA reports, "Pound for pound, the comparative impact of CH₄ [methane] on climate change is over 20 times greater than CO₂ over a 100-year period.

2. Water Pollution

Methane released during fracking doesn't just end up in the air, but also in the water. By now you've likely already seen the videos of people living near gas drilling operations who can light their water on fire as it comes out of the tap. (If you haven't then it's time to see "Gasland.") In 2011 the United States Geological Survey released a report about water in Pavillion, Wyoming where residents complained about water quality after drilling. Here's what they found:

EPA's analysis of samples taken from the Agency's deep monitoring wells in the aquifer indicates detection of synthetic chemicals, like glycols and alcohols consistent with gas production and hydraulic fracturing fluids, benzene concentrations well above Safe Drinking Water Act standards and high methane levels. Given the area's complex geology and the proximity of drinking water wells to ground water contamination, EPA is concerned about the movement of contaminants within the aquifer and the safety of drinking water wells over time.

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**E&ENews PM
Land Letter**

01/11/2013

1. HYDRAULIC FRACTURING:

EPA delaying Pavillion case for 8 months

U.S. EPA is delaying its work on the Pavillion, Wyo., water pollution case by more than eight months, angering both sides in the bitter debate about whether drilling and hydraulic fracturing contaminated drinking water in the area. Neither the people who say their water is contaminated nor the company involved, Encana Corp., wanted the delay. Representatives of both sides today criticized the decision. Go to story #1

THIS AFTERNOON'S STORIES

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EPA extends comment period for Pavillion study Associated Press (AP) - Cheyenne Bureau

01/11/2013

CASPER, Wyo._The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has once again extended the public comment period for its study of groundwater pollution in a central Wyoming gas field.

The comment period for the EPA investigation in Pavillion was scheduled to end Tuesday but has been extended until Sept. 30. The comment period was extended twice last year.

The EPA theorized over a year ago that hydraulic fracturing may have played a role in the pollution. The federal agency says the longer comment period will allow more time for people to weigh in on the testing.

The Casper Star-Tribune reports both a landowner with contaminated groundwater and the owner of the Pavillion gas field, Encana Oil and Gas, object to extending the comment period. Both sides say they want the studies to wrap up.

Information from: Casper (Wyo.) Star-Tribune, <http://www.trib.com>

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EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation related to fracking WyoFile

01/10/2013

EPA again delays Pavillion groundwater investigation related to fracking

– January 10, 2013

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has again delayed action in its highly controversial investigation into contaminated drinking water in Pavillion, Wyoming.

WyoFile obtained a document scheduled to be published in the Federal Register on January 11, 2013, announcing the extension of the public comment period for EPA Region 8's "Investigation of Ground Water Contamination near Pavillion, Wyoming" to September 30, 2013.

Public comment was first initiated in December 2011.

Tanks hold natural gas condensate and mark the spot of producing gas wells in the Pavillion field, in Fremont County, Wyo., in the heart of the Wind River Indian Reservation. The Environmental Protection Agency said it found chemicals that are used in gas drilling in water wells near this site. (Abraham Lustgarten/ProPublica)

That draft report, released publicly in December 2011, alleged that chemicals commonly associated with hydraulic fracturing – or "fracking" – indeed contributed to contaminated drinking water in the tiny, rural farming community.

The report set off a firestorm of criticism from both Wyoming officials and Pavillion natural gas field operator EnCana Oil & Gas USA, taking aim at the EPA's methodology, data and conclusions. In the controversy, a scientific peer review required to finalize the draft report has been continually delayed.

This week's news of yet another delay further frustrated stakeholders on all sides of the issue, including some Pavillion area residents who believe the EPA's investigation – and conclusions mentioned in the draft report – is the most reliable information on the matter.

"What it really means for us is months and months of waiting and still being exposed to impacts that we've suffered all along and having no resolution," Pavillion area rancher John Fenton told WyoFile. "Go ahead and extend public comment, but allow the peer review go forward. I'm trying to find out who requested this."

A spokesman for EnCana Oil & Gas USA said the company was equally disappointed.

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"This issue goes to our reputation and we take this very seriously and we don't believe the issues in Pavillion are related to our oil and gas operation," EnCana spokesman Doug Hock told WyoFile. "It's a disservice to us and a disservice to people of Pavillion and to the state of Wyoming."

Hock said EnCana had prepared several third party reports from geologists, hydrologists and other experts to submit to EPA next week. The reports essentially are a critique of EPA's groundwater investigation, which EnCana believes has been proven scientifically invalid.

That question of validity, however, cannot be officially answered until – and unless – a peer review weighs in on the matter.

Jeffrey Locker stands next to a natural gas well behind his home near Pavillion. (Dustin Bleizeffer/WyoFile - [click to enlarge](#))

The EPA issued this statement today; "During this time EPA will continue its public outreach activities including meeting with key stakeholders and posting additional technical information on the agency's website. This extension will allow the public additional opportunity to comment on EPA's draft report and the latest round of sampling conducted by EPA and USGS. The Agency will take into account new data, further stakeholder input, and public comment as it continues to review the status of the Pavillion investigation and considers options for moving forward."

In meantime, dozens of families are left without answers as to why their drinking water is fouled.

"We have all this work and it's not being allowed to continue on through this peer review process and come to some conclusion," said Fenton.

The state has pitched in money to provide cisterns as a temporary fix, although few homeowners have committed to having them installed because they still have to pay for water. The state has also launched planning efforts for a long-term water supply solution.

EnCana is still providing some water on a temporary basis. The company continues to operate about 145 natural gas wells in the Pavillion field, and says it has not performed any drilling or fracking operations since 2007. This past year, a potential buyer backed out of negotiations to purchase the field.

"That buyer decided, because of the ongoing issues with EPA, decided not to go through with that transaction," said Hock. "It's not a core asset for us."

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No contamination from fracking found in 2 Arkansas counties-USGS Chicago Tribune Collections

01/10/2013

* USGS sampled 127 wells in Fayetteville shale area

* Study shows fracking can be done safely, author says

* Draft EPA study linked fracking, water pollution in
Wyoming

WASHINGTON, Jan 9 (Reuters) - The U.S. government said it found no evidence that shale gas drilling had contaminated water in two Arkansas counties where concerns were raised about the drilling technique called hydraulic fracturing, or fracking.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) sampled 127 shallow domestic wells in Van Buren and Faulkner counties in the Fayetteville Shale area, where 4,000 wells have been drilled since 2004.

"It does show this can be done and done right with no impacts," Tim Kresse, one of the USGS study's authors and a water quality specialist with USGS, told Reuters.

Still, Kresse stressed that the results should not be used to draw conclusions about the safety of fracking around the country because geology varies widely from state to state.

Among other things, the USGS study assessed concentrations of chloride, a naturally occurring compound that would be one of the best indicators of water contamination by fracking fluids, Kresse said.

The researchers found that chloride concentrations in the 2011 samples were not higher than samples collected in nearby areas between 1951 and 1983.

Advances in fracking, which involves injecting a cocktail of

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water, sand and chemicals underground to extract fuel, have unlocked the nation's vast shale gas reserves.

But the boom in shale gas development has led to protests that the production may be polluting groundwater and air in places like Arkansas and Pennsylvania.

Responding to concerns about the possible hazards associated with fracking, the Obama administration has attempted to balance support for more gas drilling with calls to ensure that drilling is safe.

The USGS study should provide ammunition for oil and gas producers who have strongly disputed suggestions that fracking is responsible for fouling drinking water.

USGS also studied methane concentrations in 51 of the sampled wells and found that any methane detected was naturally occurring or could not be linked to the drilling.

A draft study released by the Environmental Protection Agency in 2011 linked fracking to water contamination in Pavillion, Wyoming, sparking a firestorm of debate, with state officials and drilling groups slamming the report.

The EPA retested the water in Pavillion in 2012 and has extended the public comment period on the report until Jan. 15.

The EPA is currently also conducting a long-term study on fracking and drinking water that is due to issue conclusions in 2014.

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